

things, pushes too
close;
I move him
gently away, thinking, Rabelais
you were a
mighty mighty interesting
fellow ...

as I stretch out, the ceiling
watches me and
waits.

STRANGE (1990)

it doesn't seem so long ago that I was reading
Pound, Jeffers, Auden, Spender.
it doesn't seem so long ago that I was young
coming in drunk at 2 a.m. to old roominghouses.
it doesn't seem so long ago that I found women
unattainable.
it doesn't seem so long ago that I never had
an automobile, a telephone, a bank account.
it doesn't seem so long ago that I had
a long run of visits to the drunk tank.
it doesn't seem so long ago that I tried to
be a writer,
stopped for a long time and then tried
again.

Pound, Jeffers, Auden, Spender, don't seem
so long ago.

bottles of wine and old typewriters, long
starving days, singular
nights

it's as if I could suddenly turn around in this
room and see myself again: what a fright, what a
twit, what an idiot.

beaten in rooms full of rats, it was a grand time,
not so long ago.

tonight I spoke to a man on the telephone, he is
coming to take photos and to interview me
for a German weekly magazine, for my
70th birthday.

and when I hung up I was sure I could hear
Pound, Jeffers, Auden, Spender,
laughing.